

# **Wisconsin Governor's Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

May 12, 2017

10:00AM

Room 751

1 W. Wilson Street, Madison, WI 53703

**Members present:** Nicole Everson (Chair), Denise Johnson (Vice Chair), Tom O'Connor (Secretary), Steve Smart, Karl Nollenberger, David Seligman and Michelle Cordova

**Members not present:** Lisa Woods

**Ex-Officio members:** Billy Mauldin

**Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) Staff:** Amber Mullett (Section Chief) and Mason Aumanstal (Assistive Technology Program Coordinator)

**Sign Language Interpreters:** Chantel Wiedmeyer and Carly Bieri

**Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART) Service Provider:** Margo Lucas

**Technical Assistance and Livestream Technician:** Dustin Mullett

**Chair called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM**

**Approval of the May 12, 2017 Agenda:** Karl Nollenberger motioned to approve the agenda as provided (Tom O'Connor seconded).

**Passed:** unanimously.

**Approval of the March 10, 2017 Minutes:** Denise Johnson made a request for some formatting changes and noted that there was information missing from the minutes report as drafted. Specifically, the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (Council) asked Carrie Molke questions that were not included in the minutes. Nicole Everson also noted that there was no mention in the minutes that the minutes from the previous minutes were approved. Amber Mullett noted that the Council should feel free to add missing items to the minutes before the Council meets so that the items can be voted on and approved by the Council.

**Motion:** Denise Johnson made a motion that the Council Executive Committee and Mason Aumanstal receive the CART transcript in order to have a complete reading of the Council meeting (Karl Nollenberger seconded).

**Discussion:** Denise Johnson noted that she would like to have the CART transcript as there appears to be missing information in the Council meeting minutes when they are provided. Amber Mullett noted that CART is provided as an accommodation. Mason Aumanstal acts as the note-taker for the Council meeting. Amber Mullett advised that having CART be provided as an official record is different than CART as it is used as an accommodation – there's a legal element to it.

**Motion withdrawn:** Denise Johnson withdraws her motion. Karl Nollenberger withdraws his second of the motion.

**Approval of the March 10, 2017 Minutes continued:** Nicole Everson stated that the draft meeting minutes were provided to the Executive Committee, but then were never shared with the rest of the Council.

**Motion:** Karl Nollenberger moves to table the discussion of the approval of the minutes from March 2017 until the next meeting so that information can be added by the Council. David Seligman seconds.

**Passed:** unanimously

**Action:** Nicole Everson will contact Mason Aumanstal to update the minutes and then the minutes will be amended and sent to the Council.

**Motion:** Denise Johnson moves that the minutes be sent to all council members for review and update. Steve Smart seconds.

**Passed:** unanimously

**Community updates:** Tom O'Connor said that the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) and the Wisconsin Association of the Deaf (WAD) sponsored a legislative Deaf day. There were between 100 and 120 attendees making it quite a success. The legislators seemed really interested in the concerns of the community and responded well to the use of CART. One of HLAA's primary concerns that they put forth was the use of hearing loops in public spaces as well as the use of CART for state-sponsored events. WAD urged the legislators to consider communication access for the Deaf and hard of hearing and also the effect that hearing loss has on the Deaf and hard of hearing communities.

**ODHH Updates:** Amber Mullett provided the ODHH update. ODHH developed their strategic plan in March and April. A workgroup was created to discuss potential changes to the visitor card. The workgroup will look at language, content and training to law enforcement representatives and the public. Proposed changes will be brought to the Council for review, at that time, the Council will be able to provide additional recommendations. ODHH is also working on internal policies and procedures so that the work that the office provides is consistent. The disaster response interpreter training will receive ongoing support from the office. Amber Mullett named some of the key partnerships that ODHH identified as part of their strategic plan: The Council, HLAA, WAD, Center for Deaf-Blind Persons, Independent Living Centers, Aging and Disability

Resource Centers and Wisconsin Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (WisRID). ODHH is also looking at the development of surveys so that informed decisions are made. Particularly, ODHH may develop pre and post-tests to gauge the effectiveness of their training as well as general customer satisfaction surveys. Finally, ODHH is working to develop behavioral health services for the Deaf and hard of hearing. ODHH will work with a project manager to address services and access to services. Nicole Everson appreciates that ODHH takes Council suggestions seriously and asked if members from the groups Amber Mullett identified can act as representatives for those groups on the Council. Amber Mullett stated that members from those groups may serve on workgroups for the Council.

Amber Mullett provided the update for the Southern regional Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist, Bette Mentz-Powell. Bette Mentz-Powell has been working with the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) with support from the University of Wisconsin to develop a falls-prevention yoga class for the Deaf and hard of hearing. Accommodations included CART, interpreters and a hearing loop. Along with the Stepping On Program, these programs show an improvement in balance for individuals at risk for falls. Ideally, these programs would run on a continual basis statewide. Amber Mullett encouraged the Council to invite Bette Mentz-Powell and the UW researcher that sponsored this project. The first classes featured 20 participants (ten in the morning and ten in the evening). Bette Mentz-Powell is also working with the Department of Corrections to learn how many individuals with hearing loss are currently incarcerated.

Jennifer Anderson of the Northwest region will be attending the WAD conference along with other regional representatives to provide information to the public about ODHH's objectives and current projects. Jennifer is also examining ODHH's communication to see how communication can be improved. Jennifer Anderson also developed a training and workshop survey for ODHH to find unmet training needs throughout the state. The survey is currently on ODHH's website. Finally, Jennifer Anderson has started working a few hours a week at the ADRCs in Marathon and Stevens Point; she hopes to add some time at an ILC in her region.

Caroline Ludka in the Southeastern region is leading the workgroup on updating the visitor communication card. Currently, the pros and cons of the card are being studied. Some states do not like cards that are similar to this one as it could be seen as a way of avoiding the use of reasonable accommodations. Caroline Ludka is currently working to secure scheduled hours at ADRCs as well as the local ILCs Society's Assets and Independence *First*. HLAA has identified Caroline Ludka as the ODHH liaison to the HLAA statewide board.

The Northeastern Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist Nancy Harbison has been working to develop surveys for ODHH (the previously mentioned pre/post-tests and the customer satisfaction survey). Nancy Harbison has been working to develop a standard orientation packet from our office that discusses resources available to the Deaf community in the state of Wisconsin.

Mason Aumanstal, the Assistive Technology Program Coordinator has started working with the Wisconsin Assistive Technology program, WisTech as well as the Assistive Technology (AT) Council. The Department of Health Services (DHS) chapter DHS 78 administrative rule update is moving along and a public hearing will be held to allow the public a chance to comment on the proposed rule change. The meeting will take place on May 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. DHS was also able to secure \$350,000 in additional funding to ILCs to support telecommunication services for individuals with a disability.

Amber Mullett was asked if there is anything in the Governor's budget that could directly impact ODHH. Amber Mullett indicated there is nothing that she's aware of that could directly affect ODHH (WAD and HLAA made requests to the Legislature, so that could have an impact, but there is nothing at the moment that would have a direct impact).

**Break from 11:56 a.m. to 12:07 p.m.**

**ODHH update continued:** Nicole Everson inquired about Amber Mullett's new position. Amber Mullett confirmed that she is the Section Chief providing support at this time to the ODHH, Office for the Blind and Visually-Impaired (OBVI) as well as Dan Johnson's position that a contractor is currently supporting since Dan Johnson's passing. Amber Mullett is supporting the Bureau's goal of encouraging further collaboration with the various disability related offices, Independent Living Centers and the various Councils under our purview. Amber Mullett also noted it's hard to say how many positions they will fill at the moment, but the new supervisors for ODHH and OBVI are a priority.

**Break for lunch at 12:23 p.m. and returning at 1:03 p.m.**

**Old Business:** Nicole Everson requested an update from Amber Mullett on the Board for the Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI). Amber Mullett stated that ODHH is still working with the Texas Office to lease the BEI program.

Nicole Everson asked if a letter mentioned at the previous Council meeting was sent to the Assembly Regulatory Licensing Review Committee. Steve Smart noted that he and Lisa Woods were to work together on the letter, but no work was done on it. Denise Johnson had asked Lisa Woods for an update, but heard nothing in response.

Nicole Everson asked if there was an update to ODHH.net, the office's previously used communication tool. Amber Mullett advised that ODHH will start using Gov-Delivery, a 1-way email communication tool. This will allow ODHH to send out communications as needed instead of relying on a regular newsletter. Jennifer Anderson will be leading the effort on Gov-Delivery.

**By-laws:** The Executive Committee and David Seligman worked together the day before the Council meeting to discuss how the by-laws can change. A document with notes from the previous day's meeting was provided to the Council. Denise Johnson asked if the by-laws can be amended to include individuals that are Deaf-Blind as a group that the Council would work with. Amber Mullett confirmed that the information

can be added to the by-laws but urged not changing the name of the Council in the bylaws because the Council as named is mentioned in statute. Amber Mullett further noted that the Council can explore ways to change the name, but it is a process that should start with a letter to ODHH that will then be passed along to the Office of Legal Counsel for further assistance.

The Council has an interest in changing the name of the Council to include "Governor's" at the start of the name and to include the term "Deaf-Blind".

The changes that were made were done so in order to make the rules broad so the Council has some leeway with regard to the work that they can do.

- Article IV section 1: it was decided that the following sentence be removed: "Members shall have at least one year's experience on the Council prior to election to office." It was also decided that this section should include language to state whom makes up the Executive Committee (the officers).
- Article V: Remove the sentence that states "At least one deaf or hard of hearing person shall serve on the executive committee" because the by-laws already indicate that there are only two members-at-large meaning that there can only be two members of the Council at any time that are not Deaf or hard of hearing.
- Article VI section 1, there was a change in language from "install new council members" to "elect new council officers."
- The current by-laws stipulate that the Council meet in specific months (March, May, September and December), this was changed to indicate that the Council is to meet quarterly and dates would be decided by majority vote.
- It was further codified that the Council members are able to vote via technology (email, conference call, etc.)
- Denise Johnson requested that language be added that at least one officer of the Council is present at meetings in order to take place.
- It was further decided that the date of amended by-laws will be included for this update, but it will not mention the specific changes made (as some previous updates have).

Nicole Everson suggested tweaking the bylaws as a committee and then having the Council vote on the changes by email.

**Action:** It was decided that a by-law discussion should be added to New Business on the next Council Agenda.

**Action:** Steve Smart suggested that an item be added to discuss writing a letter regarding the changing the Council's name to New Business.

**Action:** Nicole Everson suggested that the by-law subcommittee meet in order to re-write and provide changes to the Council in September.

## Break

**Strategic Plan:** The Council discussed the strategic plan that was developed at the December 9, 2016 Quarterly Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing meeting. The following strategic plan goals were discussed and positions were assigned:

- The first strategic plan goal relates to a change in the by-laws. Nicole Everson made a subcommittee for working on the by-laws; the Council will consist of the Executive Committee and David Seligman.
- The second strategic plan goal is to address and improve employment opportunities for the Deaf, hard of hearing and Deaf-Blind in Wisconsin. Nicole Everson and Karl Nollenberger expressed interest on serving on this subcommittee.
- Strategic plan goal three pushes for an increased awareness of telecoil technology and support of additional installation of hearing loops throughout the state. Denise Johnson suggested that David Seligman should lead this effort. Tom O'Connor is going to assist in this matter and will look to recruit Juliette Sterkens, AuD, the National HLAA Hearing Loop Advocate.
- Nicole Everson indicated that Lisa Woods had previously expressed interest in taking the lead on strategic plan goal number four relating to communication, Nicole Everson encourages Lisa Woods to reach out to Amber Mullett to discuss this aim.
- The fifth strategic plan goal relating to education was not taken up by anyone on the Council.
- Denise Johnson and Steve Smart both expressed an interest in working on strategic plan goal number six with Denise Johnson serving as the lead on this subcommittee relating to Public Relations. Steve Smart indicated that he will work with Denise Johnson to have a plan to present to the Council.

**New Business:** Nicole Everson expressed continued interest in getting Deaf-Blind to be officially recognized in the State of Wisconsin as a single disability. Nicole Everson reported having stayed at the Sheraton Hotel the previous night in preparation of the Council meeting and was first told that her service animal would not be able to stay at the hotel without paying a maintenance fee. Eventually, Nicole Everson was able to bring her service animal to the hotel without paying the fee. Nicole Everson also reported that there was an announcement that guests had to evacuate due to a possible fire. Nicole Everson did not hear this announcement, but her mother who drove her to Madison did hear it and was able to get Nicole Everson to safety. Denise Johnson stayed at the same hotel, and was not aware that there was an evacuation. Denise Johnson suggested that the Council approach the hotel about these incidents and further advised that ODHH should follow up on the incident if there's no resolution. Michelle Cordova suggested that ILCs would be able to act as an advocate to Nicole Everson should she want to go that route. Nicole Everson asked how the Council should react to the hotel issues. Nicole Everson also relayed other stories about not being supplied with a vibrating alarm clock or not having a TV that had a remote that could access closed captioning.

**Motion:** David Seligman moved that Nicole Everson sends a letter on behalf of the Council expressing concern on the failing of the fire alarm and would appreciate a response to the Council. Steve Smart seconded.

**Passed:** unanimously

**Action:** Nicole Everson will draft the above-mentioned letter as well as a personal letter expressing concern about her service animal and the fire alarm malfunction.

**Public Comments:** (Note: the public comments below were left by members of the public watching the Council meeting via Livestream, a live webcast service provided by DHS. Comments were not altered in any way).

Jeff Holub: What happen to TEPP / TAP Board Meeting that need update and feedback from deaf communities. They have not meeting for long time?

Jeff Holub: What is ODHH's Budget for 2017-18 and past as archive?

Jeff Holub: Will ODHH Council Members add Commission of the Deaf and HH that WAD and me want motion to ODHH Council Members for new business include bylaw.

Jeff Holub: Referral to DHS Board about Archive History :minute and other do post on ODHH like in past. There need archive who want review the history of ODHH's minutes, and other information on archive.

Jeff Holub: ODHH Staff did not contact or talk with deaf grassroots relate card?

Jeff Holub: Can ODHH add training for Deaf Yoga in different area of WI?

Jeff Holub: i mean Yoga Instructor?

Katy Schmidt: So yoga program can be helpful for specific group of our community, but what about establishing program that address the greater need of the community??

Jeff Holub: I hope ODHH or WAD ask deaf communities on what activity we need offer to them? Comedy Show at Bar, Drama Show?, Different kind of exercise class?, Woodshop or craft thing and other...

Katy Schmidt: So that Jennifer Anderson seemingly have absorbed the role that Melani Kaplan previously held, what happens to the position that Melani held?

Jeff Holub: with interpreter? budget

Jeff Holub: Have ODHH contact H.E.A.R.D. relate prison?

Katy Schmidt: Which states have bad experience with communication cards?

Katy Schmidt: Who is the designated rep from ODHH for WAD if Carolina is HLAA's designated rep?

Jeff Holub: Denise?

Jeff Holub: What happens to question here?

Jeff Holub: OLD Business need set deadline to action it and finish it on time.

Jeff Holub: ODHH need add Facebook and social account to spread the information or public relation to deaf communities.

Jeff Holub: Bylaw already got old again. You don't involve with deaf communities relate Bylaw?

Jeff Holub: Title of Deaf Service should be Wisconsin Commission of the Deaf.

Jeff Holub: Deaf does include CI, Deaf Blind and other so don't need say Wisconsin Commission of the Deaf, HH, DB, And DD. That is silly.

Jeff Holub: It may be out of order due to WAD want motion Commission and Bylaw will be different again?

Katy Schmidt: Who is currently on the executive committee?

Jeff Holub: I wonder if ODHH can provide Satellite Conference in 5 different area of Wisconsin.

Jeff Holub: Bylaw need add Sub-committee: BY Law, Mental Health, BEI, and other issues.

Katy Schmidt: why is it black screen?

Jeff Holub: Who is on Chatroom here? lol

Jeff Holub: I assume Regional Coordinator is in here too?

Katy Schmidt: What's point of having council secretary if Mason is keeping notes?

Jeff Holub: Can ODHH post minute of meeting since Office of Hearing Impaired and Archive on website.

Jeff Holub: Mason need remind about us before the meeting ADJ. pls



Jeff Holub: I mean Mason remind Council members about us.

Katy Schmidt: How does the council determine priorities without conducting community survey or even do feasibility study??

Jeff Holub: WOW, it get bigger agenda for Council.

Katy Schmidt: who is Lisa?

Jeff Holub: not sure if it s yellows weather?

Jeff Holub: sweater

Katy Schmidt: yellow sweater is Nicole

Jeff Holub: k

Jeff Holub: WAD and members need get meeting about ODHH that there is sub committee that never discussion education, loop coil and other. whoa!

Jeff Holub: New Business: change from Hearing Impaired to Hard of Hearing on State Level

David Seligman thanked the public for their questions and expressed uncertainty on how to react to the questions. Steve Smart advised that previously, the Council would take public comments but take no immediate action on them. Nicole Everson stated that she would reach out to Amber Mullett and Carrie Molke to determine how to respond and react to these comments. Denise Johnson advised that Billy Mauldin would be a good resource as well.

**Action:** Nicole Everson will approach Amber Mullett and Carrie Molke to discuss how to approach the public comments received through the internet on this and future meetings.

Nicole Everson asked Mason Aumanstal for an update to the Council on the use of social media platforms. Mason Aumanstal confirmed that the Council is able to have a Facebook account, but no DHS resources can be used for this page (this includes DHS computers and staff). Mason Aumanstal further advised the Council to get in touch with him before activating the page.

**Next Meeting Agenda:** Denise Johnson suggested that the Council consider having someone come to talk about transparency. Nicole Everson advised that Amber Mullett and Lisa Woods be approached to ask about potential speakers. Steve Smart also suggested that the Council add an agenda item to discuss the strategic plan updates, each carrying their own action item.

**Motion:** Denise Johnson moves to adjourn the meeting. Tom O'Connor seconded the motion.

**Passed:** unanimously

**Meeting adjourned at 3:53 p.m.**